

Attendance Policy

Headcorn Primary School



This policy will be reviewed every year, and at any other time if changes are required to comply with changes in legislation, regulation or national or KCC advice. Any amendments will require the approval of the Full Governing Body.

Date of approval by Full Governing Body	September 2026
Signature of Chair of Governors	T Kelly
Signature of Headteacher	S Johnson
Date Due for review	September 2027

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1. Statement of Intent

Headcorn Primary School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils, and we use a variety of strategies to promote good attendance and punctuality. Attendance that falls below 96% will be considered for further investigation and school intervention.

In accordance with Department for Education (DfE) advice to schools, Headcorn Primary School will:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensure every child has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Build strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

At Headcorn Primary School there is a whole school approach to ensuring excellent school attendance with specific staff having specific responsibilities. Headcorn Primary School will use all possible opportunities to promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality. These will include the Home – School agreement, newsletters, website, etc. The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents/carers and children. We recognise that absence is often a symptom of wider barriers affecting a child or family. Our approach is to identify and address barriers to attendance through support and partnership before considering enforcement measures."

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2026 and School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures:

- [working together to improve school attendance 2026](#)
- [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#)

This guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part/VI/chapter/II>
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/part/3/chapter/3>
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/part/7/chapter/2/crossheading/school-attendance>
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made>
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

This policy also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Parental Responsibility

Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law in order to make good progress in their learning. Poor attendance undermines their educational attainment and progress and, sometimes puts pupils at risk encouraging anti-social behaviour.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility under **Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act** and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school may create an offence in law.

Parents and carers have a legal duty to:

- ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly and arrive on time
- call the school to report their child's absence before 8.50am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence. **This is a safeguarding issue requirement so that all parties know that your child is safe and their whereabouts are known. Parents and carers should regularly update the school during any period of absence from school and inform on when their child is returning.**
- provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address
- provide the school with more than one emergency contact number of their child

- ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day and provide medical evidence indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician, if asked to do so
- seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting a member of the Office Staff or the FLO Team, who can be contacted on admin@headcorn.kent.sch.uk or flo@headcorn.kent.sch.uk or by ringing 01622 891289 and select 2 for the School Office or 3 for the Inclusion / FLO Team.
- contact the school at the earliest opportunity if their child is experiencing any difficulties and the school will do everything possible to resolve the issues

Late Arrival

Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.50am. All pupils that arrive late need to report, with their parent/carers, to the school office where the reason for lateness is recorded by the Attendance Officer.

3.2 The School's Responsibility

The school will:

- Provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe and know that their presence is valued.
- Raise awareness of the importance of full attendance and punctuality using newsletters and other forms of communications with parents/carers making attendance a high priority.
- Employ key members of staff with responsibility for monitoring, improving and evaluating school attendance. At Headcorn Primary School, this role is fulfilled by the Headteacher, Mr Sean Johnson in partnership with Mrs Bennett, the Attendance Officer and Administrator. Their contact details are available on the school website
- Follow a structured process for managing poor attendance. This may include writing to parents/carers, inviting them to attend meetings and making arrangements in school to support their child to attend school more regularly.
- Encourage our children to have a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality so that they can retain this into adult life.
- Ensure that attendance is effectively monitored using our electronic registration system and that absences are followed up promptly.
- Communicate effectively with other agencies (GPs, Kent County Council Integrated Children's Services, School Health etc) to support children with any issues there might be.
- Meet the legal requirements for recording pupil absence using the correct registration procedures and codes with reference to authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Have procedures in place to help children settle in after a long absence. It is important that on return from an unavoidable absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This will include ensuring that the pupil is supported to catch up on missed work and brought up to date with any information that has been passed to the other pupils. Please speak to the Family Liaison Officer, Mr Benfield, and your child's teacher on their return.
- Make arrangements to meet the requirements of pupils with additional educational needs or an Education Health Care Plan.

3.3 The Governing Board's Responsibility

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority

- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Link Governor for attendance is Sarah Rollinson: sarah.rollinson@headcorn.kent.sch.uk

3.4 The Headteacher's Responsibility

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Authorising or requesting penalty notices in accordance with Kent County Council procedures
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers

- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels

3.5 The Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Organising targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr Johnson, Headteacher, and can be contacted via 01622 891289 or by email admin@headcorn.kent.sch.uk

3.6 The Attendance Officer, Headteacher and Family Liaison Officer (FLO) Responsibility

The School Attendance Officer, Headteacher and Family Liaison Officer (FLO) will:

- Monitor and analyse attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Benchmark attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Provide regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the Headteacher
- Work with KPAS officers to tackle persistent absence
- If no reason for absence has been provided, the attendance officer will ensure that parents/carers are contacted on the first day of absence by phone call. These phone calls will be made in addition to and separately from other correspondence made by any other School department.
- Report concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Work with Local Authority KPAS Officer to tackle persistent absence

- Ensure, where there has been no communication, that contact is made with parents/carers requesting reason for absence. Should there be no communication welfare checks will be undertaken in accordance with safeguarding procedures and the level of risk presented.
- Follow policies and procedures for addressing poor attendance in line with this policy.
- Advise the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

The School Attendance Officer is Mrs Bennett and can be contacted via 01622 891289 or by email admin@headcorn.kent.sch.uk

3.7 Class Teachers' Responsibility

Class teachers will:

- keep accurate registers (Teachers mark pupils present and the Attendance Officer marks / codes in any absence or lateness.)
- complete the register at the beginning of each morning and once during the afternoon session (Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement.)

3.8 School Office Staff's Responsibility

School Office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the FLO Team where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - The original entry
 - The amended entry
 - The reason for the amendment
 - The date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.50am and ends at 3.20pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken between 8.30-8.50am (during our staggered drop off) and will be kept open until 9am.

The register for the second session will be completed by 1.15pm for all classes.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via 01622 891289 or emailing admin@headcorn.kent.sch.uk . An answerphone is available for messages to be left if calling out of hours.

We will mark absence due to physical illness or mental health illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the absence.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

You should inform the school by emailing the School Office on admin@headcorn.kent.sch.uk

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent or carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late (after 8.50am):

- Before the register has closed at 9am will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- Arrival after the register has closed at 9am will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

A text will be sent to the registered parent/s or carer/s informing of the lateness.

Frequent lateness after the register has closed will be discussed with parents/carers and could provide grounds for prosecution or a Penalty Notice.

4.5 Following up Unexplained Absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts and there is a safeguarding concern, external agencies may be contacted when all contact methods have been exhausted.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving a KPAS Officer.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents/carers to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals

4.6 Reporting to Parents/Carers

The school will regularly inform registered parents about their child's attendance and absence levels:

- attendance is discussed at the two parent teacher consultations per year
- in their interim reports (end of Term 2 and 4)
- in their annual end of year report (end of Term 6)

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer informing the school of any absence to keep other adults with Parental Responsibility (PR) informed of the child's absence.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for Term-time Absence

The Headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The Headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Attending a medical or dental appointment
- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment (agreed beforehand with Kent's Child Employment Team)
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational setting
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the parent/carer will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.

- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent's/carer's or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- Or where the school has evidence that there are other pressing personal issues for a family that would warrant a short break from school.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a pupil's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

It is important to note that a leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website: www.headcorn.kent.sch.uk, from the School Office or in Appendix 2 below. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent/carer's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent/carer does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents/carers will be notified.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the case may be referred to the Inclusion and Attendance Service who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent/carer for each child taken out of school. (See Sections 5.2 Sanctions below.)

If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental health) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s)/carer(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s)/carer(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)

- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Other absences (for example leave for holidays) during term time can only be approved in 'exceptional circumstances'. The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent nonspecific illness e.g. 'poorly' or 'unwell'
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Absence due to parent/carer illness or appointments
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Child/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family Holidays (with some rare exceptions)
- Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis. Whilst national persistent absence is defined as below 90%, the school intervenes earlier when attendance falls below 96% in order to identify barriers and provide support before attendance becomes a significant concern.

At Headcorn Primary School, we will follow the following procedure for tackling poor attendance:

- Letter 1 sent when a child's attendance drops below 96% to bring it to the attention of the parent/carer and ask if any support is needed. This is the school intervention threshold.
- Letter 2 inviting the parent/carers to attend an attendance meeting if attendance continues to drop following letter 1 so support can be outlined and offered.
- Notice to improve to be considered if absence continues to drop and national threshold is met.

Penalty Notices

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent/carer who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent(s)/carer(s) who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent/carer must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents/carers allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents/carers that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent/carer must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to Improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents/carers do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents/carers a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents/carers under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

The school promotes good attendance in a number of ways:

- Conveys a clear message and vision for attendance to all members of the school community, including parents, carers and pupils, with clear communication including newsletters, assemblies, emails and social media.
- Clear messaging about how absence affects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes.
- Recognise attendance as an important area of school improvement and Pupil Premium strategy.
- Congratulations emails sent to children who have 100% or improved attendance within a school term.
- Attendance is highlighted clearly to parents/carers in a child's interim and final school report.

7. Supporting Pupils who are Absent or Returning to School

7.1 Pupils Absent due to Complex Barriers to Attendance

- Meetings with parents/carers to discuss barriers to attendance
- Family support where suitable or available including signposting to other agencies or support groups
- Soft landing with time in Nurture upon arrival
- Home visits (with parental agreement unless there is a specific safeguarding concern)
- Referral to External agencies, including School Health, Front Door, not just KPAS
- Offering an understanding ear, bespoke approach dependent on circumstances

7.2 Pupils Absent due to Mental or Physical Ill Health or SEND

The school will work in close partnership with the parent/carer regarding mental or physical ill health, medical conditions or SEND. The SENCO, with the support of the Attendance Team, will engage with parents/carers regarding the child's needs and discuss specific barriers to attendance. Each child will be engaged and supported with a bespoke plan appropriate to their needs.

Where a pupil has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils Returning to School after a Lengthy or Unavoidable Period of Absence

The SENCO will engage with parents/carers regarding a suitable reintegration plan. This could involve a part-timetable if appropriate with a gradually increasing amount of time being taught in school. Learning support will also be offered for the time that the child may not be on site.

Social reintegration will also be offered to ensure that the child is supported reintegrating with their peers. This could include small group work in partnership with the Nurture Team.

A bespoke approach will be offered to the parent/carer and child according to individual circumstances.

8. Attendance Monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

Attendance data is reviewed at least fortnightly at pupil level and half-termly, termly and annually at cohort and whole-school level. Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the governing board. This benchmarking will be facilitated through our meetings with a KPAS officer.

8.2 Analysing Attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups (SEN, Disadvantaged, Young Carers, boys, girls, etc) or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Regular attendance reports are available to class teachers through Bromcom, our Management Information System (MIS), to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators), DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads) and Pupil Premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:

- Discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
- Explain the help that is available
- Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
- Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- The school will follow statutory Children Missing Education procedures where a child is absent and their whereabouts are unknown, making reasonable enquiries and notifying the local authority as required.
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

9. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher and members of the Attendance Team (FLOs and Attendance Officer). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies which can be found on the School website:

www.headcorn.kent.sch.uk :

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Home School Agreement
- SEND Policy

Appendix 1	Attendance Codes
Appendix 2	Extraordinary Leave of Absence Form
Appendix 3	School Referral Pathway
Appendix 4	Examples of attendance letters

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open

Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2

Headcorn Primary School

Kings Road, Headcorn, Kent TN27 9QT

Phone: 01622-891289

Website: www.headcorn.kent.sch.uk

Email: admin@headcorn.kent.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr Sean Johnson



*Aspiration Inclusion Resilience
Learning for life...*

Extraordinary Leave of Absence Request – Exceptional Circumstances

Dear Parent/Carer,

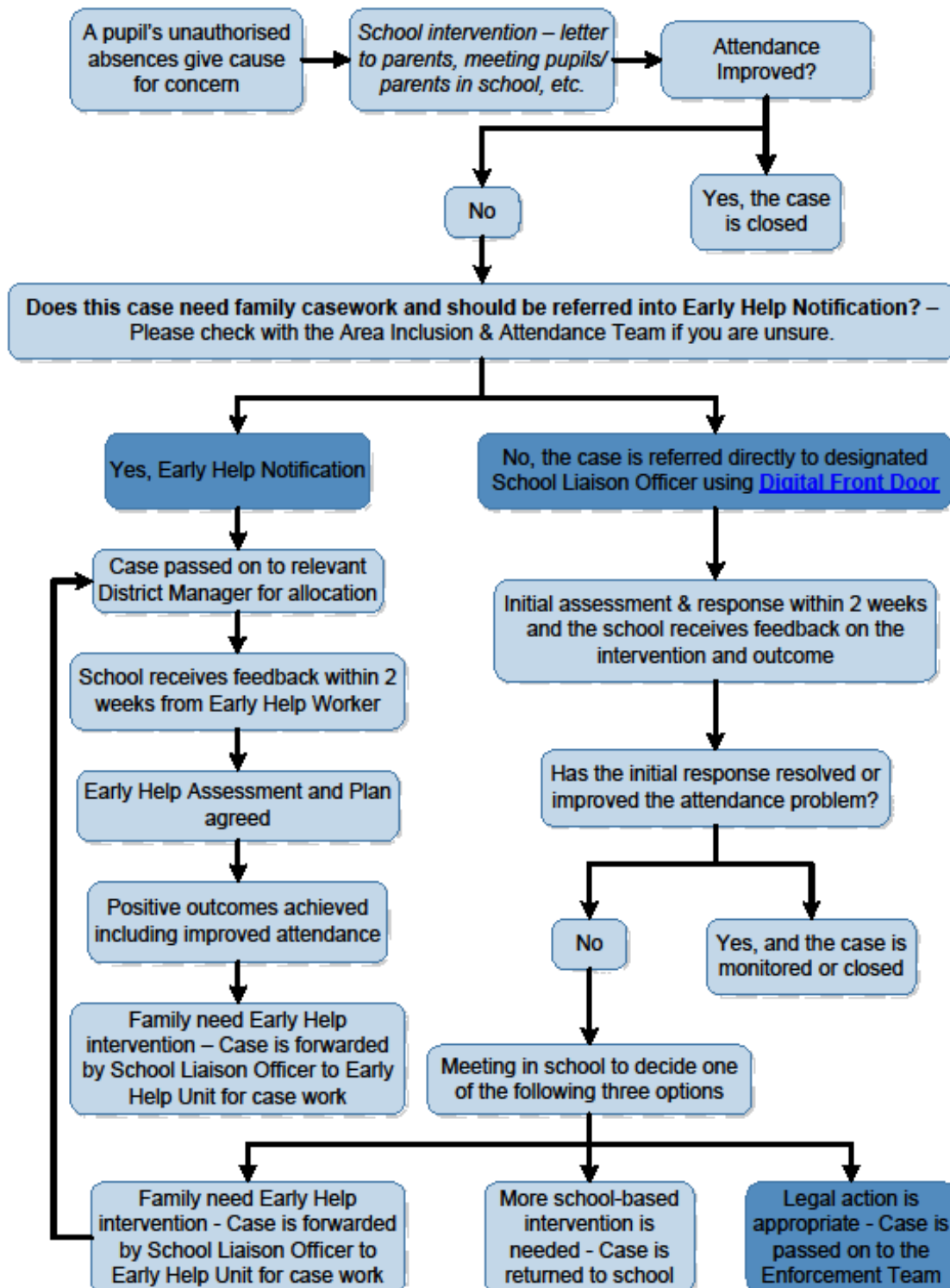
This form is for the purpose of applying for a short leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances. This request form should be submitted at the earliest possible date; preferably at least two weeks prior to the planned absence.

PLEASE NOTE – **Current school attendance regulations** state that the Headteacher should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

PLEASE FILL IN SECTION A and return this form to the School Office.

SECTION A
Name of pupil/s: _____ Class/es: _____
Date/s of absence: From _____ to _____ Number of days: _____
Please state the reason for the absence below: Details: _____ _____ _____ _____
Signed: _____
For office use only:
SECTION B: Extraordinary Leave of Absence Request – Exceptional Circumstances
To the parents/carers of: _____ Class: _____
Your request for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances on (date/s): From _____ to _____ Number of days: _____
is AUTHORISED / NOT AUTHORISED
Signed: _____ Headteacher Date: _____

Kent School Referral Pathway – Pupil Attendance



LETTER 1

Attendance Below 96% Notification

Date: [MERGE DATE]

Dear [PARENT TITLE] [PARENT SURNAME],

Re: Attendance Update for [STUDENTNAME]

At Headcorn Primary School, we want every child to have the best possible opportunity to learn, achieve and enjoy their time at school.

Our records show that [STUDENTNAME]'s attendance has fallen below 96%, and we wanted to bring this to your attention.

Attendance Information

- Current Attendance: [ATTENDANCE%]
- Authorised Absence: [AUTHORISED%]
- Unauthorised Absence: [UNAUTHORISED%]

We recognise that some absence can be unavoidable, particularly where children have experienced illness or other exceptional circumstances. However, attendance below 96% can begin to have an impact on learning and social development, and we feel it is important to keep parents informed.

At this stage there is no further action required. We simply ask for your support in ensuring that [STUDENTNAME] attends school whenever possible and arrives on time each day. If there are any circumstances that may be affecting attendance, or if there is any support that the school may be able to offer, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We will continue to monitor attendance over the coming weeks. We hope to see attendance improve and, should this happen, no further action will be necessary.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,
Sean Johnson
Headteacher

LETTER 2

Continued Attendance Concern and Invitation to Attendance Meeting

Date: [MERGE DATE]

Dear [PARENT TITLE] [PARENT SURNAME],

Re: Attendance Concern for [STUDENTNAME]

Recently, we wrote to advise you that [STUDENTNAME]'s attendance had fallen below 96%. Unfortunately, our records show that attendance has continued to decline since our previous letter.

Attendance Information

- Current Attendance: [ATTENDANCE%]
- Authorised Absence: [AUTHORISED%]
- Unauthorised Absence: [UNAUTHORISED%]

We understand that there can be many reasons why attendance becomes a concern and our aim is to work with families to identify any barriers and explore the support available. We would therefore like to invite you to attend an Attendance Meeting at school.

Attendance Meeting

Date: _____

Time: _____

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Review attendance levels.
- Discuss any factors affecting attendance.
- Consider what support may be appropriate.
- Agree actions to improve attendance moving forward.

We encourage you to attend so that we can work together to support your child.

If you are unable to attend, please contact the school office to arrange an alternative appointment.

Yours sincerely,
Sean Johnson
Headteacher

Notice to Improve

If attendance continues to drop following an attendance meeting, then a 'Notice To Improve' could be issued and a family specific letter would be sent at this point containing information outlined in 5.2 of this policy.

Lateness Concern Letter

Persistent Lateness Notification

[School Letterhead]

Date: [MERGE DATE]

Dear [PARENT TITLE] [PARENT SURNAME],

Re: Concerns Regarding Punctuality for [STUDENTNAME]

We are writing to make you aware that [STUDENTNAME] has been arriving late to school on several occasions.

Lateness Information

- Number of Late Arrivals: [NOOFLATES]
- Total Minutes Late: [LATEMINUTES]

Whilst individual late arrivals may seem insignificant, they can quickly accumulate and result in a substantial loss of learning time over the course of a school year.

Arriving late can mean that children miss important instructions, teaching inputs, registration activities and opportunities to settle positively into the school day.

At this stage, we simply wished to bring this to your attention and ask for your support in improving punctuality.

If there are circumstances that are making punctuality difficult, please contact the school so that we can discuss whether any support is available.

We will continue to monitor punctuality and hope to see an improvement over the coming weeks.
Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,
Sean Johnson
Headteacher